HEADS UP!!!-CONCUSSION IN HIGH SCHOOL SPORTS
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Over the past several years, increasingly larger numbers of adolescents are sustaining concussions. The majority of these injuries are sports-related. The higher number of concussions may actually be related to our greater awareness of the injury. What used to be called “bell-ringers” or “dings” may in fact, be concussions. These head injuries may take longer to heal than previously thought, even the fairly milder injuries. Concussions can occur without loss of consciousness, vomiting or other symptoms. Headache, dizziness, fogginess, poor attention span and unusual behavior are some of the signs of concussion. Anyone who has sustained a possible head injury should be examined by a professional health care provider. Once diagnosed, restricting mental exertion and physical exertion until asymptomatic is now the cornerstone of treatment. It is imperative that student athletes do not return to play until evaluated and then cleared by a health care provider. If athletes return to play too soon before their brain is healed, they risk the possibility of Second Impact Syndrome, which is far more serious than the first concussion and sometimes even fatal.

SCHOOL NURSE ROLE:
If your child sustains a concussion, please notify the school nurse. Before returning to school, the nurse should receive a letter from the physician. The letter will describe the student/athlete’s injury and any limitations or modifications. The nurse will serve as the liaison between the teachers, athletic trainers and coaches. No student athlete will be permitted to return to play or gym until they are cleared by a health care provider.

The CDC has provided a fact sheet for parents on the subject of concussions. For further information and a copy of the fact sheet, please access the following:

http://www.cdc.gov/ncipc/tbi/CGToolKit/ParentsFactsheet.pdf